LIVE

SHOW MUDDY

NME's mudlarks report from GLASTONBURY '90: three days of rain, ritual,

FRIDAY

THIS IS not a good start. The hazy dust bowl of last year's madness and mayhem has metamorphosed into a stinking quagmire. The cider saps have barely started their weekend's vomiting and already the mud is sticking, stinking and making life difficult.

If the excessive sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll don't wreak havoc with the 100,000-plus punters, then the weather will. I know this because as **Galaxie 500** kick Glastonbury '90 into gear, my car wheel spins through a field full of cow shit, wraps itself round a pole and I kiss my good nature goodbye.

Stomping through sludge in wellies and face paint, tripping over tent pegs and being at the mercy of schizophrenic elements is not my idea of a fun time. Things could go horribly wrong.

The Pale Saints battle bravely against the elements, but they're too frail and delicate to contend with the weather and are bullied mercilessly. Ian's voice wavers in mid air, is bruised and buffeted by the wind and then tossed to one side. 'Barging Into The Presence of God' still gets the juices flowing, but Pale Saints are not suited to the outdoor life. Their music is for cramped conditions, low ceilings and wall-to-wall bodies.

Next door neighbours **Lush** are also given a rough time. In fact today's been a nightmare for them. Their van's already been towed away by the police and now Miki laughs nervously as the PA system refuses to co-operate with their carefully sculptured sound. Miki's voice, usually perfect as a sample, is chewed up and spat from the speakers, then blown away. The razor sharp edge of 'Mad Love' becomes fuzzy round the edges and loses its power. However, despite all the technical blarney, spotty adolescent boys still squirm, squeal and rub their crotches in excitement.

By the time **The Neville Brothers** appear, everyone has discarded macs and bin liners for short sleeves and sandals. They warm the atmosphere with generous helpings of sweet soul music, spiced with calypso, R & B and general funkiness. Happy chicks swing their loonpants and pump peace signs into the air, Goths shuffle guiltily from foot to foot looking nervously to see if their brethren have caught them dancing and even Happy Mondays have wandered outside to take a peak.

The appearance of **Adamski** at this year's festival puts the ultimate seal of approval on the status and significance of dance music. It's touched everyone here no matter what culture class they belong to. And despite the arrogant claims of trendy magazines that ravers were going to dominate this year's festivals, Glastonbury proved that nothing so tedious or cliquey will happen. Ravers didn't swamp the festival, they merely added another dimension to it.

You would have thought that out of everyone appearing on today's bill Adamski would be the most comfortable, having played to thousands of people at last year's parties. Not so. Adamski, looking like Alex from *Clockwork Orange* with his orange hair and bowler hat, is sweating nervously in a corner muttering that he's "shitting himself". Today he hasn't even got Seal for support, hence 'Killer' is deprived of vocals and all eyes are fixed on the tiny figure banging out the tunes. But before you can say 'Manchester Vibes in the Area', Fonzo Buller waltzes onto the stage, swinging his dreadlocks behind him and assigns himself the role of MC. The mood immediately picks up and **Paul Oakenfold** ousts **Andy Kershaw** from his throne to continue the flow.

I thought things might peter away to nothingness with **Jesus Jones** who have always failed to move me in any way. I can't even be bothered to dislike them. But today, so far, they're the strongest act to take the stage. Perhaps it's the weird weather or something I ate but they sound brilliant. I think I'm impressed by the fact that their music keeps threatening to topple the stacked speakers, blasting the crowd and parting their hair. The singer's still a twerp with his brattish attitude but they can't half move a crowd.

Having been lashed by crackles of feedback and ricocheting rhythms of 'Real, Real, Real' and ever reliable 'Info Freako', I spend the next half hour with my fingers shoved in my ears as **Gary Clail** hits the decks and shakes a few bowels with booming bass and heavy dub.

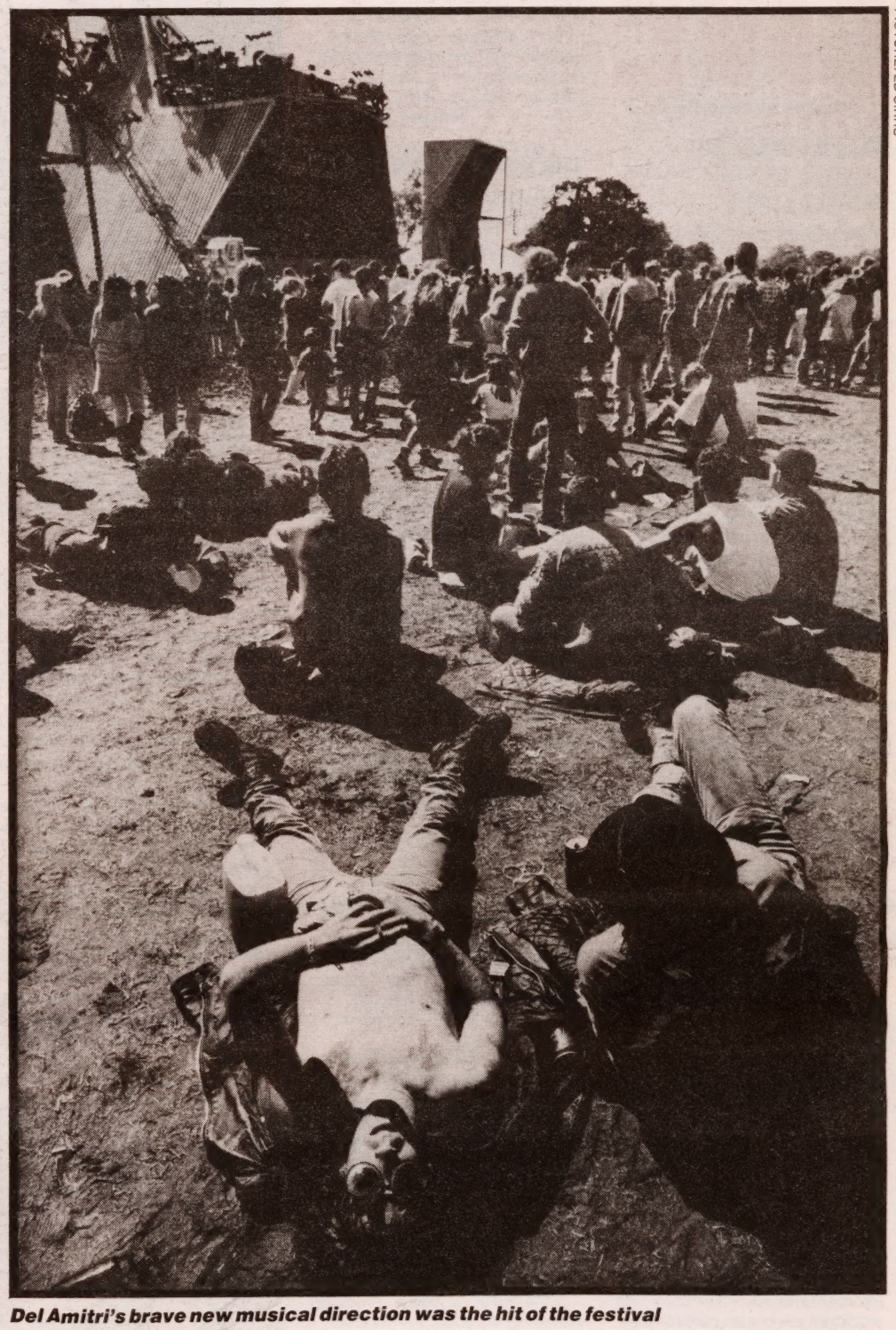
Then it's hurrah! for those **Happy Mondays**. The fact I'm stuck behind someone with back-combed hair is neither here nor there because you know what they look like by now. No doubt Bez's eyes are out on stalks and Shaun is slouching round the stage like his spine's collapsed.

'Lazyitis' drawls and falls as Shaun forgets what he's singing about and the sample on 'Clap Your Hands' has a poltergeist in the machine which switches itself on and off at random. The music seems to be coloured in weaker shades than usual, and the sloppy, belligerent attitude which has previously held everything together doesn't quite gel tonight. The loping rhythms of 'Wrote For Luck' still cajole the uninitiated into dancing and 'Step On You' stomps all over the show leaving funky footprints. But the set is too short, 40 minutes if that, and I'm left feeling cheated. Just as things started bubbling, they disappear. Very seven out of ten.

Now if you want a grand finale, then catch **Archaos**. Some dodgy French band bang out strange Gallic rock whilst their chums strap themselves to large sheets of metal, juggle chainsaws, drop cars from great heights, belch fire, dice with death and generally keep heads craned and gobs open. The *coup de grace* is a shower of fire works which sends the acid-heads loopy and puts your teeth on edge.

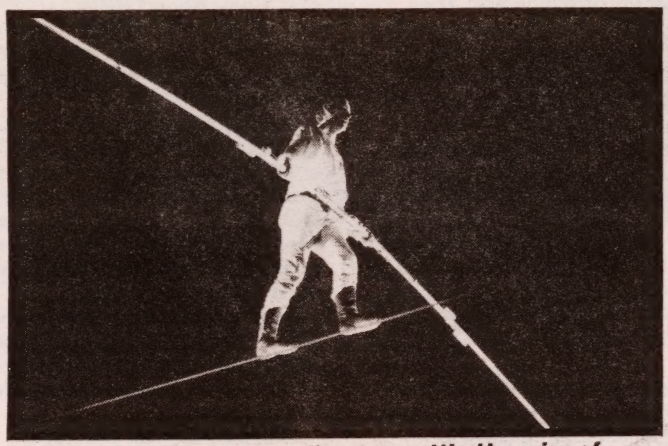
Joy and pain, sunshine and rain. It's what this festival lark's all about ain't it?

Mandi James



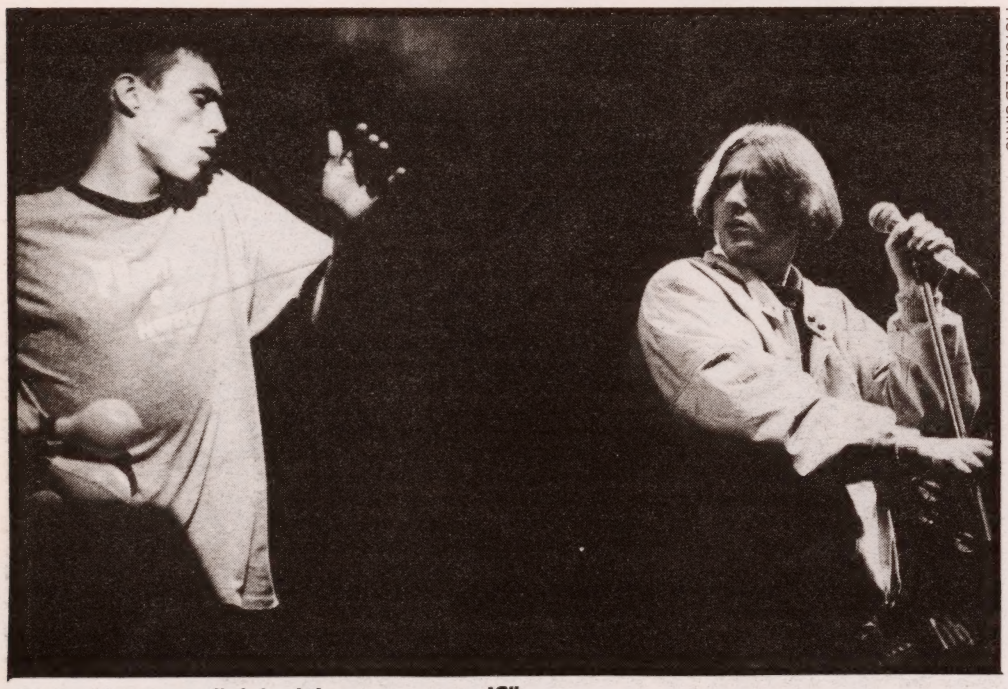
PICTURE: ED SIRRS

Del Amitri's brave new musical direction was the hit of the festival



PICTURE: ED SIRRS

The Archaos tight-rope walker was rattled by cries of "What's on the end of the stick, Jean-Claude?"



PICTURE: ED SIRRS

"Eh Bez, have you finished those passes yet?"

SATURDAY

DAWN, SUNDAY. Outside, the human detritus of youth culture past – hippies, punks, rockers *et al* – roll over in their black bin liners in the dirt. Inside the 'rave' tent in the Travellers' field the music is kicking and the children of Equity Culture are still buzzing to 'Acid House' the hard way. Wakey, wakey, mateys.

If the parties last year at Glastonbury were an unexpected, spontaneous offshoot – and I'm told they were – then in 1990 they are the saving grace of the festival even if the organisers have tried their damnedest to put a stop to them or at least keep them on the smallest possible scale for fear that they will draw the law. Which is ridiculous given the amount of 'dodgy' dealing that goes on at Glastonbury.

Never mind.

At 6am the dancebeat goes on, multi-coloured strobes flicker, the Tonka sound shifts up a gear, and bods continue to work it to the bone. A more mellow vibe is needed. Something a bit Balearic. A walk is in order.

Scummy mud. Lots of it. Below the Travellers' field where all the convoy people are plotted, the festival site stretches away into the distance, over the valley, and up the opposite hill. At night this tented town sparkles with a 1,000 fires. At dawn with the flags of every nationality, biker gang, hippie conspiracy and boy scout troop flapping in the wind, Glastonbury resembles Agincourt before the battle.

Or maybe after it. People stagger drowsily trying to find their homes. There appears to be little genuine intermingling of the various youth tribes apart from drug and food transactions. Others stop where they fall to be sniffed at by manky dogs. Shire horses look on sagely.

'Anarchy In The UK' blasts out as we stroll through an anarcho-punk commune. It seems anachronistic, redundant, both the lifestyle and the noise. A couple of fields across, the party continues by the World Music stage. 'Ghetto Heaven' wafts over. The field is strewn with bodies chilling out. Shaun Ryder is still awake and dancing. Inside another tent filled with papier-maché heads, 'Acid House' pumps. Big fat ear-ripping synth squirts puncture the dawn and yesterday's hours become one long blur of colour, smells and sounds. How did it all begin? With the Boo-Yaa-Tribe? Actually, no.

At mid-day on Saturday a band called **The Avalon Stompers** somehow made it onto the main pyramid stage to serve up a slice of Dixieland jazz which, needless to say, seemed somewhat bizarre given the surroundings. In fact all the music on the main stage seemed weird given the surroundings.

The first people to bring that home are **The Boo-Yaa Tribe**, heavyweight Samoans who slap street-rap, funk attack and Mothership-isms together. In an LA nightclub at 3am, the Boo-Yaa's might make sense. At Glastonbury they make little impression (on me at least). Ankle deep in mud and with all lines of sight of the performers blocked, and with a PA system so quiet that at the rear of the site you can hear the acid drop, I decide this.

The music coming from the main stage may be a focus but it's hardly the main buzz of Glastonbury. All the acts are secondary to the event itself. And there is little point in reviews of the music as such under these conditions. So a nap and a bit of The Cameroons versus Colombia on the telly is in order.

Meanwhile **James** come and go and almost steal the show according to our Deputy Editor, Danny Kelly. "I've never been a big fan of James but their set was excellent and they really got a good reaction out of the crowd," he says.

De La Soul get short shrift from our Media Editor, Gavin Martin: "I like their music but they aren't a good live act in a club, let alone before thousands of people in the open air."

Del Amitri get even shorter shrift from Production Editor, Brendon Fitzgerald, and sub-editor Andy Fyfe: "What relevance do they have in 1990? They were rubbish."

The game was boring as well.

Sinead O'Connor would have

-MUDDY

GLASTONBURY 90

raggle-taggle, rap and slipping R's over elbow

PICTURE: TIM PATON

Despite her best efforts, the crowd refused to join Sinead in a Mexican Wave

to be dead and in her coffin with the maggots eating at her eyes to qualify for such a description. I can't see her from my spot in Mudstock, there's a crane in the way which Circus Archaos have used to winch a car to the top of the pyramid stage. But there's no mistaking the emotive power in her voice.

Sinead speaks very little between songs – though she does dedicate 'Stretched Across Your Grave' to Margaret Thatcher – but the sounds she pulls out of both her mouth and band are very pure and say enough. Far more than U2 or Hothouse Flowers, Sinead embodies the firey, dark, absurd poetic legacy of Ireland.

And **The Cure**? Well they embody the Max Factor. Dusk begins to fall on the tented town and Robert Smith and his cohorts parade a greatest hits show. It's spectacularly disturbed by a police helicopter landing by the backstage area to pick up a woman who has been crushed at the front of the stage. Apparently she checked out of hospital the next day.

As 'Inbetween Days', 'Killing An Arab', 'Love Cats' and 'A Picture Of You' feed outwards with a pristine sound zooming around the site, The Cure prove themselves to be a great progressive pop band full of musicianly complexity. But you knew that already.

I personally wouldn't spend £38, which is how much a weekend ticket to the festival is, to stand in the mud to find out The Cure or any other band are fine entertainers. Because of its sheer scale and the discomfort involved, Glastonbury – the live show – is no way to enjoy music. The 'Acid House' 'raves' are, however, a different deal.

Circus Archaos dance on top of the pyramid dressed in what look like bits of bin. A high-wire act walks along a hawser from a pole to the stage. He takes out a sword. Cuts the rope holding up the aforementioned car and it crashes onto the ground. Fireworks illuminate the night – for me the buzz of the festival – and then it's time to go up the hill to find the Equity party.

Jack Barron

SUNDAY

OPERATING ON one of the basic principles of Nature – that what goes in eventually must come out – Glastonbury Security had, by Sunday, performed a magic trick worthy of a performance in the Circus Field, turning all the entrances, bar one, into exits.

"You can drive in there, but we're not responsible for what happens," Johnny Gateperson informed our trusty driver. "The Travellers are pulling people from their cars and beating them up, and the Hell's Angels security aren't doing anything to rescue them." The peasants, it seemed, were definitely revolting. The sight of Tony 'Baldrick' Robinson hanging around outside the Gate to Hell was already enough of a shock for one day. But the job of reporting the goings-on must be done at any cost, even a human life. It just won't be mine.

Zooming off in the opposite direction, we declined Baldrick's kind offer of one of Mrs Miggins' delicious pies in the shape of a pie, and hot tea with milk and sugar to embark on our long descent into the Arena, musical accompaniment provided by **World Party**'s 'Message In A Box'. The band almost missed the Festival completely, their apparent non-arrival prompting a backstage announcement that the performance had been cancelled.

PICTURE: TIM PATON

Tim Booth takes the early spot. Larry: "You wouldn't let it lie!"

Someone spoke too soon. Karl Wallinger & Co were delayed getting on to the site, finally making it so late that they had to go straight onstage wearing their very un-rock-like street togs, only to be pronounced "brilliant" by Stuart Bailie, *NME*'s Man On The Spot (but only because he'd been stuck there all night). Certainly 'Ship Of Fools', when it caught the wind and wafted up from the field, was the business.

World Party couldn't be seen from up on high, but then they couldn't be seen down front either. Isn't it amazing how one selfish sod's big head can block a decent view for hundreds of people, one of the many joys of Festival-going? The rule of thumb at Glastonbury seems to be that the more you can see of a performer, the less popular they are.

For all I know, on Saturday, Sinead O'Connor might have been Peter Garrett from Midnight Oil on his knees miming to a tape (except that the bald person who appeared onstage was definitely the same one who'd partaken of the delights on offer in the ladies loo earlier that afternoon.) But I could actually see the whites of **Flaco Jiminez**' eyes, and the reds of **Aswad**'s, though they soon became tiny figures as they drew more and more of the crowd in.

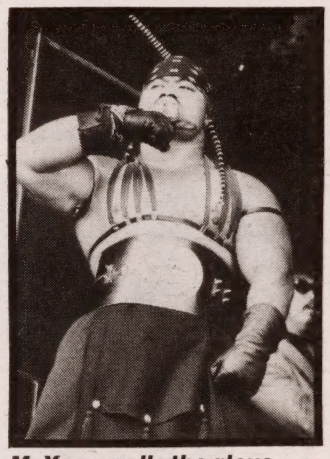
Back in the Acoustic tent, the acts were required to sign a pre-performance contract stipulating that they would play a song containing the words *"Poll Tax"* and *"we won't pay the"*, preferably not in that order. If your taste runs to juggling fruit, watching an Astrological Clock Dance, or enjoying Lady Christobel and her butler, Jason, maverick with robotic dance (whatever that means), then Sunday at Glastonbury was the day for you.

Unfortunately, the aforementioned threat of violence against my person meant that I missed **Martin Hooper**'s talk on 'Green Sexuality', and **Rupert Hopkins U**'s lecture on 'Zen Photography and the Green Future'. How happy I would have been to hear **Brig Oubridge**'s explanation of 'Travellers – Experimental Lifestyle', but I would have had to experience one of the Travellers' experimental deathstyles – their hands around my throat – in order to be there in time.

Venturing into the hippiest, dippiest Green Field brought with it all manner of delights, including **Roger Winfield**'s Aeolian Harps. ("Wind for your pleasure" read his sign). Winfield spent four months recording natural wind sounds in Spain through home-made instruments, giving a live demonstration of their ethereal harmonics at Glastonbury. If you can have your brain massaged by music, the Aeolian Harps are the instruments to do it.

Mano Negra wouldn't get much use out of Aeolian Harps. They're in the market for whatever makes the most raucous racket. Back on the main Pyramid stage, the band's frenetic hybrid of stomping World Music proved to be the last real knees-up for several hours, with the Pyramid acts descending into the seriously muso and/or mellow category.

Hothouse Flowers were as guilty as anybody, with Liam O'Maonlai failing horribly to exorcise the Bruce Springsteen demons that tend to possess his soul. Joined onstage by **Katell Keineg**, the band performed an extremely long, tiresome version of 'I Can See Clearly Now'. "This is dead boring," moaned one nearby punter to her friend. It was hard to disagree.



PICTURE: TIM PATON

Mr Yaa smells the glove

But the worst Performance Of The Festival (Main Stage) Award was won hands down by **Deacon Blue**, who reached a lowpoint with their version of Burt Bacharach and Hal David's sublime 'I'll Never Fall In Love Again' that made Frazier Chorus sound like The Butthole Surfers. Ricky Ross and Lorraine McIntoch may be many things (answers on a postcard, please) but they're not Richard & Karen Carpenter. The very clean-looking mob who suddenly materialised among the grunge at the front of the stage for Deacon Blue waved their fists and sang along to 'Real Gone Kid' but no-one was fooled. Deacon Blue are crap. "Keep in touch," said Ross at the end, a curious suggestion from someone who obviously isn't.

It took a return trip to the Acoustic Stage to get rid of the (Deacon) blues. Five minutes of **Chris Lynam** and friend playing 'Duelling Banjos' on tubas did the trick. Lynam turned up later in the Theatre marquee terrorising small children and stealing people's shoes. **Chris Luby**, a truly bizarre act, impersonated the Trooping Of The Colour, complete with horses and marching band; a World War II Spitfire taxiing across grass and taking off; and the entire drum corps of a military band playing 'The British Grenadiers'.

After Deacon Blue, the rest of the Pyramid stage performers came up with the goods. Tex-Mex accordion virtuoso **Flaco Jiminez** drew the smallest but most respectful crowd, which swelled to huge proportions for **Ry Cooder** and **David Lindley**'s display of laidback guitar heroics.

Aswad, making their fourth Glastonbury appearance, literally got the crowd back on its feet, performing a strangely rock 'n' roll (for them) 'Jailhouse Rock' and a reggaefied version of 'On And On' that improved the cringe-inducing Stephen Bishop original to the point of near unrecognisability.

It was left to **Ladysmith Black Mambazo**, free of Paul Simon's smug patronage, to bring the weekend's proceedings to a dignified close with their hypnotic chants. (So hypnotic, in fact, that I dozed off.)

All in all, 72 hours of rather decent music, a surfeit of veggie burgers, and far too many nose-rings (especially above the bridge of the probosces). The final three-day scoreboard: Births – Definitely one, reports of up to three. Deaths – One rabbit, nearly one girl; one already dodgy credibility (The Cure.) See you next year.

Jane Garcia

PICTURE: TIM PATON

Bob Smith remembers when he was the same size as the Boo Yaa Tribe